



City of Cincinnati

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 4, 2003

Contact: Kathy Allen, Administrative Specialist
Greater Cincinnati Water Works / 513-591-7970

GREATER CINCINNATI WATER WORKS INSTALLING “H₂O RADIO” METER SYSTEM

Greater Cincinnati Water Works (GCWW) is improving customer service by taking steps to eliminate meter reading hassles for customers. Upon the completion of a four-year project to update their meter reading system, GCWW will no longer need access to customers' homes to read meters.

Starting in June 2003, GCWW contractors will install the new “H₂O Radio” system that will send a low powered radio signal from a unit connected to the water meter to a computer in a van. This will allow GCWW employees to read meters while driving down the street without entering homes. Over the next four years, new automatic meters will be installed at no charge in all 235,000 customers' homes and businesses that currently have GCWW water meters.

“This is a great project,” stated David Rager, Director of Greater Cincinnati Water Works. “We get to improve customer service while keeping costs down. For our customers this will virtually eliminate meter reader visits and estimated bills. These efficiencies will reduce our costs while improving customer service.”

This new automatic meter reading technology has been proven in a number of communities across the United States. Cincinnati City Council voted unanimously to support the project on May 21, 2003.

Beginning this week, GCWW customers in parts of Bond Hill, St. Bernard, Elmwood Place, Carthage and surrounding areas will receive information about this project. Each week customers in additional neighborhoods will receive information letting them know that H₂O Radio will be coming to their area soon.

A detailed installation schedule has been developed. To keep customers' meter reading dates unchanged throughout the project and to increase efficiency, the H₂O Radio installation schedule will follow existing meter reading routes. Although these routes overlap community boundaries, H₂O Radio must be installed following this schedule and individual requests for installations cannot be honored.

Installation will require a connection to water meters. When access inside a home is required to make the upgrade, the GCWW contractor will schedule dates for installation, Monday through Friday from 7 am to 7 pm, or Saturday, 8 am to 4 pm. Installation generally takes less than one hour.

- more -

The GCWW contractor for this project is VSI Group, Inc., with Neptune Technology Group, Inc., supplying meters and equipment. After an initial testing phase, VSI employees will install about 200 meters a day with all 235,000 meters being updated by July 2007.

VSI installers will wear blue uniforms with a VSI logo. They will carry two photo identification cards: a GCWW contractor's card and a VSI card. Their vehicles are white with the H₂O Radio logo on both sides. GCWW wishes to remind customers to ask for identification from anyone who comes to their door. The policy is "No identification – no entry." If they have any concerns, customers can call GCWW at 513-591-7700 to verify that installers are in their area.

Greater Cincinnati Water Works, a municipally owned and operated utility, serves the entire City of Cincinnati, most of Hamilton County, the City of Mason, and parts of Butler, Warren, and Clermont Counties. For more detail, visit www.cincinnati-oh.gov/gcww.

###